

# OPTIMISTICALLY SPEAKING

The Newsletter of the Optimist Club of Greater Vienna

December 2015

## Calendar

December 1 through 23\*—Christmas Tree Sales

Weekdays 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
Sat. & Sun. 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
(\*or earlier, if all trees sold).

December 2 — **NO MEETING!**

December 4 — Ethics Day for Marshall High School Seniors

7:45 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Tysons Westin Hotel

December 6—Hannukah Begins

December 9 — Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m.

December 16 — 60th Anniversary Celebration and Holiday Banquet

Westwood Country Club,  
Founders Room  
6:15 p.m.



December 23 — Fourth Wednesday

Dinner at Culmore Teen Center—Team D  
\*\*Check for date change with Team Captain Anna Ryjik!

December 25—Christmas Day

December 26\*—Move Tree Lot stands and trailer back to storage (\*if not before)  
9:00 a.m.

December 31—New Year's Eve

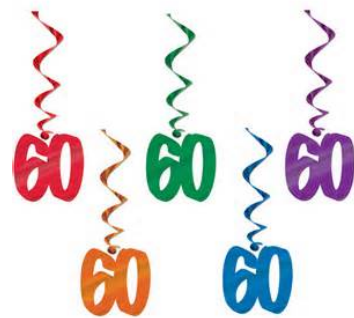
## Spotlight on Upcoming Events

**Please Note: We will NOT have a regular dinner meeting on December 2.**

It's time to get in touch with **your inner elf** and **sell some Christmas Trees!** Our first weekend of sales were strong, despite teams depleted by out-of-town travel and ill-timed illness. But **we have hundreds more trees to sell**—along with wreaths, garland, and tree stands—so we need **EVERYBODY** to do his or her share. And then, in the great Optimist tradition, do a little more than your share. **Our Youth Fund depends on this major fundraiser, so please come out and support the Club and your fellow Optimists!**



Our **dinner meeting on Wednesday, December 16** will be a very special event, as we celebrate our **Club's 60th Anniversary** and the holiday season at Westwood Country Club. Along with our traditional entertainment by the Madison Madrigals, we will have guest speakers sharing their stories of how our Club influenced their lives. Our fellow Optimists who have been members for 20 years or more will be recognized for their service. All in all, an evening you don't want to miss!



**RSVPs are required**—if you have not yet confirmed that you will attend **and** made an entrée selection (chicken or salmon), **contact [Tom Spengler](#) ASAP.** Guests are welcome at an additional charge; contact Tom for details.



Serving the Youth of Greater Vienna  
for 60 Years!

Visit us at [www.OptimistClubofGreaterVienna.org](http://www.OptimistClubofGreaterVienna.org)  
We're on Facebook! [Facebook.com/ViennaOptimistClub](https://www.facebook.com/ViennaOptimistClub)



## From the President—

Dear Fellow Optimists,

It's a great time to be an Optimist!!

November is a wonderful month, when colder air comes into chill us a little to prepare us for Winter. Many of the trees have lost their leaves, which are ready to be taken from our yards. One last yard cleaning we have to do before Spring. Virginia has a special way of ushering in a new season.

In November and December we celebrate Thanksgiving and Christmas, which are always joyous times of the year for me. Thanksgiving is a great time to serve others. I always think about feeding the hungry and clothing the needy at this time of year. Christmas is a special time for Christians and many others where we follow the leadership of Jesus Christ and open our hearts to forgiveness and love. An Optimist has many of these characteristics with big hearts and the need to help others.

It has been said that optimism is reacting to problems with a sense of confidence and superior personal ability. Optimist people believe that negative events are temporary and limited in scope and the real truth is that life will continue in a positive way. Since the end of July, I have been dealing with an accident that broke my leg. Subsequent to the injury, my leg got infected. These are the times when an Optimist can overcome because of the natural support of others and of the continuous belief that this unfortunate situation is only temporary. I thank everyone's help and patience for the last few months. I am looking forward to celebrating December and an amazing new year!!!

We conducted a well-attended board meeting on November 11th where we discussed new possible fundraising activities and the modification of the dues structure of the club, among other things. A committee continues to review the club's bylaws and policies. A new dues structure was passed for new members under 30 as we continue the youth movement in our membership roles. Our continuing thanks to Kathy Cutri and Angelique Ayala for their energetic recruiting efforts!

The Christmas Tree sales in front of the Giant store on Maple Ave have begun. This is our biggest fundraising project of the year so please step forward and help out. There are many duties at the Christmas tree lot that everyone can perform, from receiving money and handing out candy canes to trimming trees and putting them on vehicles. We have 5 teams lead by team captains. To me, this is one of our most enjoyable activities since we get to see families with little children pick out their Christmas tree. If you have not been assigned to a team, please contact Jim Houston at 703 405 2033.

This month we celebrate the Club's 60th Anniversary with special events at our annual Holiday Banquet. Guest speakers will talk about their association with the Vienna Optimist Club and how it affected their lives. We also plan to recognize members of the club with 20 or more years' membership. Additionally, the Madison Madrigals will provide their magical musical melodies. So please join us in celebration our 60th!!!

As you can see, the club is very active and we really need your assistance and support to continue to be the premier club in Vienna. So please go to our web site at <http://www.optimistclubofgreatervienna.org/> and volunteer for something. Thanks!!!

*President Joe Miller*



### December Birthday Wishes to:

Dan Mulville – December 7

Bill Doughten – December 16

Kathy Cutri – December 26

Les Carl – December 27

### Optimist Anniversaries in December

Joe Bosco - 58 years

Rich Ordeman – 37 years

Jerry Covel – 32 years

Sheryl Friedley – 22 years







## Tree Lot Update

Nov. 21: The “new” trailer was rolled out for its second year of service, the sign erected, lights strung, and frames readied, thanks to the efforts of **Mary Delurey, Rich Ordeman, Dan Mulville, Randy Sawyer, John Andrews, Jeff Johnson, Dick Lippert, Gary Moonan, Dick Gongaware, Tom Spengler, Grant Marsh, Ed Wonder, and Steve Bukont.** Special thanks to **Tim Stanton** for moving the trailer.

Nov. 24 & 27: One thousand trees were unloaded and stacked with the help of the **Madison HS Baseball team** and **Optimists Randy Sawyer, Jeff Johnson, Tom Fraim, Dan Mulville and Dick Lippert.** Spike stands were deployed, trees unwrapped, drilled and placed on display for sales to start, thanks to **Randy Sawyer, Jeff Johnson, Dan Mulville, Dick Gongaware, George Stone and Rob DiRocco.**

**Nov. 28: Lot opened for business!**

Thanks to **Jim Houston** for this report and **Gary Moonan** for the photos.



Above Left: Grant Marsh and Dan Mulville knock together an A-frame.

Above Right: Choose your adage: “Many hands make light work” OR “Too many cooks spoil the broth.” Either way, the sign is up!

Below: The Madison Baseball Team gets the Club’s thanks (and a donation) from Past President Dick Gongaware.



## Optimists on Display at VBA Non-Profit Luncheon

Our Club’s presence in the community was on prominent display at the Vienna Business Association’s annual Non-Profit Luncheon on November 13.

The many ways in which we work to “Bring out the best in kids” were featured on our (well-traveled!) poster, as were our award ribbons from past Vienna Halloween Parades. (The VBA sponsors the Halloween Parade along with the Town’s Parks and Recreation Department). Local businesspeople and leaders heard about our activities in remarks by President-Elect Michele Wright.



## Alternative House’s Jade Leedham: Kids Need Us



If we ever start to doubt that kids in Fairfax County need our support, we will have Jade Leedham of Alternative House remind us again: there are lots of kids in need, and what we do makes a difference.

Jade addressed the Club on November 4 and spoke about the importance of early assistance to kids and families, before they reach a crisis. AH’s Culmore Teen Center and Safe Youth Projects are examples of this work. We are glad to be part of the effort. Our Club’s Fourth Wednesday dinner program provides on-going support to the Teen Center. As a Club and individually we’ve also made special donations, e.g. for backpacks and school supplies and, at the Nov. 4 meeting, Thanksgiving baskets, which go to kids and families in AH’s Community-Based Services.

## Scholarships Awarded to Six High School Seniors

The **Carol Waite Brennan Youth Appreciation Awards** were presented at our November 18 meeting. A senior girl and boy from Madison, Marshall, and Oakton high schools each received a \$1,500 scholarship, which will be sent directly to their college or university next summer. Counselors from the schools introduced each recipient; all were very deserving.

Jim Houston provided some reflections on Carol’s life and her role in our club. A high point of the evening was Jim Stivison’s presentation of roses to Kelly Brennan. It was great to have Jim back.

—by Mike Fitzella, VP for Youth

## 2015 Recipients of the Carol Waite Brennan Youth Appreciation Awards

Left to right: Jack Balch, Marshall HS; Wilson He, Oakton HS; Isaiah Raxsdale, Madison HS; Paige Cilluffo, Madison HS; Samantha Van Heest, Marshall HS; Sidra Sharieff, Oakton HS; and Kelly Brennan.



### November Board Meeting Highlights

The Board of Directors met on November 11, 2015, with 8 members present. Highlights of the meeting are as follows:

- Reviewed, made adjustments to and approved the budget for the 2015-2016 Optimist year.
- Discussed a dues structure for members under 30.
- Discussed plans for the Holiday Party to be held December 16 at Westwood Country Club.
- Noted that all arrangements for the tree lot with the bank, shopping center owner, and the town permit were complete.
- Approved cancellation of the December 2 dinner meeting.
- Approved the membership applications of Tara Voigt (sponsored by Laurie Cole), Steve Bukont (Kathy Cutri), Nicole Pham (Joe Miller), Jeff Bechtle (Tom Spengler) and Letitia Romero (Angelique Ayala).

### Vienna's Own Olympic-Hopeful Veronica Day Starts Strong in Skeleton Season

*From a recent USA Bobsled and Skeleton Press Release:*

**CALGARY, CANADA** (Nov. 13, 2015)- American **Veronica Day** (Vienna, Va.) won bronze medals in the first two women's skeleton North American Cup races at the Canada Olympic Park in Calgary ....

"The entire week of sliding was definitely a struggle," Day said. "We arrived very late in Calgary and we had to be up early the following morning for the start of official training. The ice was really slow for the first two days. ... In the end, I'm happy with my results, but it certainly left me wanting more."



Veronica Day, far right, won bronze medals in skeleton events at the North American Cup races. Photo courtesy of USA Bobsled and Skeleton, usabs.com.

Our Optimist Club provides financial support to Veronica to help her reach her Olympic goal. She has been the guest speaker at our Helping Hands Awards and is scheduled to speak at our Youth of Excellence Awards in 2016.

### OPTIMIST CLUB OF GREATER VIENNA Board of Directors 2015-16

President	Joe Miller
Secretary	Jim Houston
Treasurer	Tom Fraim
Immediate Past President	Dick Gongaware
President Elect	Michele Wright
Vice President of Community	Anna Ryjik
Vice President of Finance	Dick Lippert
Vice President of Media Relations	Tom Bauer
Vice President of Membership	Kathy Cutri
Vice President of Youth	Mike Fitzella
Director of Community	Susan Bauer
Director of Social Media	<i>vacant</i>
Director of Membership	Angelique Ayala
Director of Youth	Jim Stivison
Webmaster	Gary Moonan

### *The Optimist Creed*

#### Promise Yourself . . .

**To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.**

**To talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet.**

**To make all your friends feel that there is something in them.**

**To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true.**

**To think only of the best, to work only for the best, and expect only the best.**

**To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.**

**To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.**

**To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile.**

**To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.**

**To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.**

*Christian D. Larsen*